



Indiana  
Department  
of  
Health



# Genomics and Newborn Screening Newsletter

## September 2023

### News & Events

#### September is Newborn Screening Awareness Month

Newborn screening is a public health initiative done in each state to help identify babies at risk for certain conditions. A newborn baby may look healthy but can have a serious condition that cannot be seen. The conditions that newborn screening looks for often go undetected in babies, making it difficult to diagnose and treat early. Performing newborn screening 24-48 hours after birth allows newborns to be diagnosed and treated early, making all the difference in the long-term health outcomes of each baby.

Indiana's newborn screening program includes a set of three screens: a heel stick to screen for over 50 genetic conditions, pulse oximetry to screen for critical congenital heart disease, and a hearing screen for congenital hearing loss.

We encourage everyone to celebrate with us as we reflect on the lives that newborn screening has touched!

Visit [Baby's First Test](#) for more information.



### Newborn Screening

#### NBS Spotlight: The best of the best



The NBS program would like to highlight three Indiana hospitals for their outstanding work surrounding dried blood spot sample quality, dried blood spot storage consents, and Monthly Summary Report (MSR) submissions.

**The Women's Hospital Deaconess** in Newburgh, IN, is first in the state for best dried blood quality, with ZERO rejections out of the 1,600+ samples submitted!

**Union Hospital** in Terre Haute, IN, has the most complete DBS Storage Consent Cards, with only 6% of their nearly 1,000 samples having blank or missing DBS consents.

MSR reporters from **Clark Memorial Health** in Jeffersonville, IN, have provided exceptional service to IDOH by facilitating enhanced communication of NBS results across state lines.

The GNBS program appreciates your dedication and hard work!



#### Folic Acid Awareness Week

This year, the National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN) recognizes September 10-16 as Folic Acid Awareness Week. The NBDPN observes this week to celebrate the successes of folic acid in preventing serious birth defects of the spine and brain. These birth defects, such as spina bifida and anencephaly, are types of neural tube defects (NTDs) that develop very early in pregnancy, before most women even know they are pregnant. Folic acid is a B-vitamin that is necessary for proper cell growth and, if taken before and during early pregnancy, can prevent up to 70% of these serious birth defects. Visit the [NBDPN website](#) for events, resources, educational information, and more.



#### Meet Holly Miller!

Holly has been with the GNBS program for many years. She currently serves as the Indiana Birth Defects and Problems Registry (IBDPR) reviewer. In this role, she ensures data quality for the IBDPR program. She collaborates with team members on many projects, including the latest CDC Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring project. Holly received her Master of Public Health degree from Fairbanks School of Public Health. She thoroughly enjoys serving Hoosier families and has a passion for newborn screening and birth defects awareness. In her free time, she enjoys going on outdoor adventures with her husband and two daughters.

### Did You Know?

#### Everyone should get 400 micrograms of folic acid daily, especially pregnant and reproductive age women

Folic acid is a form of folate (a B vitamin) that everyone needs to create new cells. It is especially important for women of reproductive age to help prevent neural tube defects (NTDs), which happen in the first few weeks of pregnancy, often before a woman knows she is pregnant.

While taking a multivitamin with folic acid may be the easiest way to ensure the 400mcg per day intake, it is also possible to supplement your diet with folate-rich foods. Here is a list of common household foods rich in folate:

- Broccoli • Bananas • Beets • Brussels sprouts • Papaya • Citrus fruits
- Nuts and seeds • Avocados • Eggs • Fortified grains (pasta, bread, flour, etc.)
- Beans • Peas and lentils • Liver • Dark green, leafy vegetables

[Click here](#) for more information about folic acid and birth defect prevention.



To **promote**, **protect**, and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers

